

DCI/IC-73-1221  
29 October 1973

MEMORANDUM FOR: Mr. Colby

SUBJECT : COINS Assessment Group

1. The proposed response, now pending in your office, to Admiral Anderson's letter of 25 September on COINS states that you are setting up a small group to advise you and to provide some yardsticks as to the concepts and other basic considerations that should underlie a national intelligence data base.

2. COINS is an agenda item for the 5 November IRAC meeting, and we have been in touch with ASD(I) and other IRAC principals. [ ] has a very positive program underway in response to your charge to him as Executive Agent for COINS. He knows of [ ] desire, as expressed in a letter to [ ] dated 4 October, for a discussion on "the management, rather than technical, aspects of COINS planning ... in November either separately or as part of the IRAC agenda." [ ] will speak to all of these matters at IRAC.

3. I suggest you indicate at the IRAC meeting that CIA is setting up a COINS assessment group, and ascertain from discussion in IRAC how such a group can best serve both you and [ ] I would advise against establishing the group prior to the IRAC meeting on 5 November.

4. When the group is organized, I feel strongly that [ ] Acting Chairman IHC, should participate for the IC Staff, and I would like your approval on this point. [ ] memorandum to you of 12 October proposes that PFIAB consultants, Griffith and Oetinger, be included in this group, as a means to bring PFIAB and DCI interests to a common focus. This proposal has merit in that it gives us another way to communicate with [ ]

5. The scope and approach for the assessment group should be established in an initial meeting with you. I suggest that the following topics be included among those that the group should look into:

- Dissemination limitations. These restrictions now impede the extent to which the files of a single agency can be shared throughout the COINS community. Most of these controls may well be necessary. We should be on record, however, as having made a current examination of this matter, and have formed an appreciation of the impact of these limitations.

- Relation of computers to intelligence analysis. This topic involves our appreciation of the rapidly developing capabilities of computers and networks tying them together, along with multiple remote terminals. What is the nature of our forward planning to relate these tools to the tasks of intelligence analysts -- with respect to organizing specialized bodies of information, filing and retrieving it, exchanging it, and using it for such analytical processes as current intelligence, warning, estimative intelligence, and data base development?

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